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Public Administration, Human Resources
and Social Development Division

APPROACHES AND METHODS FOR TRAINING SENIOR PERSONNEL FOR DECENTRALIZED ADMINISTRATION

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SECTION I: **INTRODUCTION**

Rationale of the Study

1. The training of personnel for the implementation and management of sustainable development should be regarded as one of the critical ingredients in measures to enhance the socio-economic recovery and development of the economies of African countries. A nation could be endowed with all the material resources required for the production of goods and services but if its human resources are undeveloped and illiterate, such a nation would find it difficult to cross the threshold of underdevelopment. The centrality of human skills input in the development process was underlined in the Lagos Plan of Action(LPA) adopted by the 2nd Extra-Ordinary Assembly of OAU Heads of States and Governments, devoted to economic matters meeting in Lagos, Nigeria, April 1980.

2. The LPA emphasized measures to be taken to ensure that Member States achieve a certain level of self-reliance in trained human resources and technical know-how in all economic sectors as well as formulate adequate policy and programme guidelines on the long-term perspective education,training and development of Africa's human resources,technical and managerial skills. The training of senior personnel for decentralized administration must therefore be seen within the broad framework of training for the management of the development activities and programmes of the whole nation. Public employees need to understand, for instance, what it takes to make the profits on which corporate taxes are based as well as how the economy functions to produce the goods and services that society requires for consumption and investment every day of the year and beyond.

3. Public sector employees have been experiencing serious problems in the management of diminishing financial resources vis-a-vis the social welfare demands of the public since the escalation of the current economic crisis in the early 1980s. It is , therefore , imperative for governments to design and implement training programmes geared to the strengthening and the enhancement of the capability and the capacity of public personnel to handle ongoing and future challenges with assiduity and confidence. Decentralized administrations should have persons who are knowledgeable and can provide motivation through astute and efficient leadership in all aspects of economic management and administration. The training of senior personnel would have a multiplier effect on the development of personnel skills in both centralized and decentralized administration. The trained personnel could themselves become trainers of their own subordinate staff. There will also be intra-institutional mobility in the sense that trained personnel could function effectively across the whole spectrum of the public sector including central and local government institutions.

4. Further, there is the consideration that well trained senior staff would be in a better position to appreciate the importance of the development initiatives of the local people. This is so because training imparts not only technical skills and knowledge but also imbues the trainees with the ideals of popular/democratic participation and the centrality of human relations in development planning and management. In this regard, the choice, design, formulation and implementation of training approaches and methods deserve careful attention at all levels of government.

Definition of Concepts

5. Notwithstanding the availability of a compendium of literature 1/ on decentralized administration, there is no clear-cut consensus on the various forms nor on the most appropriate mix of centralization and decentralization of government in Africa. It could, therefore, be argued that each country attempts to approach the design and implementation of decentralized administrative system based on the meaning the country would like to assign to the concept. This meaning could emanate from diverse sources including the preferences of the country's political leaders, academicians, past and incumbent senior civil servants, the colonial legacy, aid donors and financiers, and the demonstrated experiences of African and non-African countries. In the circumstances, it is important to suggest working definitions of decentralized administration and related concepts in this study in order to guide debates on the issues and facilitate the determination of gaps that might be filled through other studies in the same or related disciplines.

(i) Decentralization

6. Decentralization may be defined as the organizational and managerial change involving the central government's dispersal of power(the ability to act); authority (the right to act); and functions (duties and responsibilities), in political and/or socio-economic decision-making, implementation and accountability to subordinate or sub-national units of the central government and to local NGOs and other grassroots organizations. This dispersal could take the form of (a) deconcentration; (b) devolution; (c) delegation; (d) transfer; and (e) any permutation of the preceding forms.

7. Deconcentration entails the establishment of field or out-of-headquarters offices with or without powers, authority, and functions identical with those of the main office or Ministry. Devolution, on the other hand, involves the effective delegation of central government powers, authority, and functions as would have been appropriate for the governance of various areas of the country to

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1/ Commonwealth Secretariat, Decentralization for Development: A selected annotated bibliography (London, Management Development Programme)

subordinate or sub-national units of government and related local institutions. Delegation of specific functions to state-owned enterprises and private sector agencies in local areas either on ad hoc or permanent basis could also be referred to as decentralization. The central government may also transfer some of its functions to local grassroots institutions.

8. A workshop on "Decentralized Administration in Africa: Policies and Training Experience" defined decentralization as the transfer of authority to plan, make decisions and manage public functions from a higher level of government to any individual, organiztion or agency at a lower level. 2/ Decentralization does not imply that the central government should abdicate its prerogative and ultimate accountability for the social and economic wellbeing of all the people within the national frontiers. Therefore, centralization and decentralization are not mutually exclusive but rather self-reinforcing as strategies of development planning, implementation and management. This should be a pertinent consideration in the design of training approaches and methods.

(ii) Senior Personnel of Decentralized Administration

9. In view of the rationale of this study and the definition of decentraliztion, senior personnel could be defined as any central and local government staff who is responsible and accountable for the performance of one or more subordinate staff. This definition covers all categories of supervisory,executive, managerial, technical, and administrative staff in the central and local government service. Because of the mutual relationship between the central and local government,an appropriately trained person should be able to serve effectively and efficiently irrespective of the location or duty station in the public service of a country. The designations that countries give to their senior personnel are as diverse as the number of countries,say, in Africa. In the circumstances, a succinct and catchall definition is essential.

10. It is also important to bear in mind the fact that central government personnel deal with matters on decentralized administration and should therefore be included in the consideration of training approaches and methods. In every African country, there is a central government ministry or department that is charged with central government responsibility for decentralized administration or local government. These central government institutions are known variously as Ministry of Local Government, Ministry of Local Government and Lands, MInistry of Local Government and Rural Development, Ministry of Interiror, etc. Senior personnel who deal with decentralized administration could therefore include permanent secretaries, assistant secretaries and their deputies; town clerks,

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2/ Commonwealth Secretariat,Decentralised Administration in Africa: Policies and Training Experience (London, Management Development Programme, Jan., 1989) p.13

administrative/executive secretaries, council treasurers, council health officers engineers, and mayors, especially mayors who are also the chief executives of their local government councils as is the case in most francophone countries. Thus, the question of who should be considered as the senior personnel of decentralized administration should be viewed against the background of the practice in individual countries and the broad definition indicated in the preceding paragraph.

(iii) Training Approaches

11. Training approaches may be defined as the strategies adopted for the formulation and the implementation of training policies,policy measures, projects and programmes aimed at realizing the development goals of countries that have chosen the path of decentralized administration as a viable route to sustainable development. The focus of training could be on incumbent or prospective employees. The most important consideration would seem to be the nature of functions expected of the trainees. Training approaches for centralized and decentralized administration should be as dynamic as the multitudinous variables in the development process.

12. The formulation of training approaches depends on a clear understanding of the objectives of decentralization. Without this understanding, the training function and hence the formulation of training policy could be in disarray. Training approaches are also a guide to training methods; a further indication of their significance in training policy implementation. The preceding definition of the concept of senior personnel, therefore, suggests that countries would tend to opt for training strategies which would upgrade the level of effectiveness of those who are charged with responsibilities for the success of decentralization as a vehicle for rapid and sustainable socio-economic development.

(iv) Training Methods

13. Training methods may be defined as the systematic and orderly ways of implementing the training policy, function, plans, training approaches and programmes to ensure that decentralized administration has the technical and managerial persons for effective development management. Haphazard training methods can lead to inefficiency and the retardation of development.

A wide range of methods is available for the training of senior personnel for decentralized administration. Methods and training approaches need to be harmonized in order to be effective and efficient in achieving the desired objectives.

14. Some of the prevalent training strategies or approaches and methods could be articulated as in Fig. 1

Fig.1 GUIDE TO SOME IMPORTANT TRAINING STRATEGIES, METHODS AND TECHNIQUES

Strategy	Meaning	Comments
S1 Conference	A meeting of several people (often high level) designed to share experiences on a common topic or problem with the specific aim of evolving a course of action for meeting identified problems	A conference has a specific theme and objectives and often involves other methods and techniques. Unless it is full of lively activities, a conference can be boring if reading is centred on long and windy papers. Syndicate discussion groups and plenary sessions at conference promote maximum participation. Discussion, however, should facilitate adequate opportunity for questioning and explanations.
S2 Workshop	It is a teaching/learning experience in which participants learn about the operational problems in their specific field for the purpose of promoting the type of knowledge, skills and attitudes required for their day-to-day activities.	As a problem-oriented type of learning situation, workshops should provide participants with the opportunity to develop practical ideas and skills which they can use on the job immediately after they return to that job. Unless participants are properly briefed before the workshop, the exercise may not produce valuable learning effect. A number of methods and techniques are also involved. A workshop requires adequate preparation, effective monitoring and follow-up.
S3 Seminar	Traditionally an academic and research oriented gathering in which participants are expected to discuss original research and experience-based issue and problems and exchange results through reports.	Seminar is used differently today to mean any form of learning gathering. If taken in its original meaning most people who attend seminars these days are not qualified.
S4 Symposium	A meeting in which several speakers deliver short addresses or talks on a topic.	Within its strict definition, symposium provides no opportunity for feedback. It is contemporarily used as after-dinner large scale discussions. Extremely little application to skills training.
S5 Sensitivity	This is a laboratory oriented training in which participants learn by studying how different group members perceive events and one another through experimentation with different styles of interpersonal behaviour and group work.	Generally unstructured learning strategy designed to improve interpersonal and group skills. Some people find the strategy very stressful and opponents of sensitivity training (T-Groups) that some participants suffer "psychological damage". Whilst this is a seomewhat controversial issue there is no doubt that T-Groups should be run by people who have received specialized training.

S6 Job Rotation	As its name suggests, this involves the learner in spending periods of time doing a variety of jobs within the organization.	As often practiced, job rotation can be very demotivating and a waste of time. This is because little thought is given to the choice of appropriate jobs - appropriate, that is, both for the learner in his current state of development, and for the potential contribution that can be made to the organization. It is therefore all too common to find trainees being shunted around from department to department, feeling lost and useless. Equally the departments involved find the whole exercise an embarassment. On the other hand, if carefully planned, with goals and provision of coaching/counselling and discussion, exercises and projects, job rotation can provide the opportunity for very real benefits to both the learner and the organization.
S7 Institute	This is close to a workshop but it is one-problem oriented and generally designed for a particular time of the year.	Generally common in USA such as the Summer Institute for Curriculum Development.
M1 Lecture	The instructor talks to or at his audience explaining concepts, ideas etc. There is relatively very little interaction between speaker and learner; that is, little questioning, discussion, active participation or feedback.	In practice, this is one of the most commonly used methods. However, in recent years its effectiveness has been questioned. A good lecture can be very stimulating, although in general it is considered that lectures are low on motivation. There is strong evidence that people lose interest in listening to a speaker after a relatively short time - approx. 20 minutes.
M2 Discussion	Discussion differs from talk and lecture in that the emphasis is on a true sharing of ideas, rather than passing them on from trainer to learner. In a true discussion, the trainer is almost as likely to be influenced by the learner as vice versa.	Many trainers use discussion to reinforce the idea that they have been putting over in talks. In a sense, this is not the purpose of discussion and might be said to be a particularly participative talk. Real discussion involves a free exploration of ideas, opinions and attitudes, not an attempt to change those in any particular direction. Most learners seem to enjoy discussion, although some, especially those who are very much looking for the "right answer" soon find it a "waste of time".

M3 Programmed Institution/ Learning	There are two types of programmed learning, which are in fact based on different learning principles and in many ways or very different steps. The learner is asked to make responses (usually to answer a question) which, due to the very small step, he is bound to get right. By doing this many times he gradually learns to make the desired response whenever asked to do so, i.e., he always does the right thing.	Programmed learning was originally very much tied to teaching machines. These are, however, no more than complicated, bulky and expensive ways of turning the pages of a book, so nowadways most programmes are in fact, presented in simple book format. The majority of programmes are written for teaching "knowledge" subjects, but they can be very successful in other areas, such as skills and attitudes. The writing of a programme is a very lengthy and time consuming process. Also, many learners find programmed learning (especially linear programmes) very boring. On the other hand, a well-written programme is probably the most effective expository or explanatory method available.
M4 Case Study (Incident Study)	The learner is given details of an event or situation which includes as much as is thought appropriate. Using this description as a base, he then (a) analyses the situation to determine what has caused it and/or (b) makes suggestions/recommendations for overcoming the problem. Very short case studies (with a minimum amount of date) are often called "incident studies" In some case studies, the learner is given little initial information, but has to decide for himslef what other information would be helpful. He can then obtain this other information by asking the tutor. (This is sometimes known as an "information maze").	Case studies are usually but not necessarily carried out in small groups. There is some argument about the extent to which case study learning is transferable back into the work situation. On the one hand, such skills as analysing, interpreting, diagnosing are probably transferable but on the other hand, some learners make unwarranted transfers of learning, assuming that the cause of the problem in the case study represents the only possible cause of similar problems back to work. All case studies represent gross oversimplifications, often, simple cases, designed to bring out a few points well, are more effective than more ambitious complicated ones. Most learners find case studies highly motivated
M5 Project	A project is a "real" exercise; that is, although its prime purpose is to provide a learning opporutnity, it usually involves working in an organisation (usually the learner's own) on a real problem, i. e one that is of real significance to that organization. Thus, carrying out a project involves the use of a wide range of skills, with an end proudct that is of actual use.	The project provides an opportunity both for the practice of skills that have been learned off-the-job, and for discovery in on-the-job setting. It can therefore play a useful part aiding transfer and in bridging the gap between classroom and working situation.

Method	Meaning	Comments
M6 Business Games Simulation	There is quite an amount of confusion as to exactly what constitutes a "game" or situation". In particular, the difference between "game/"simulation" and "experiential or discovery exercise" is not at all clear. As originally used, the term "business game" was reserved specifically for a type of exercise in which learners formed groups which then ran a whole simulated company (usually in competition with other groups) making the sort of decisions usually made by the Board of Directors. These decisions were then evaluated by the umpire (using either appropriate charts and formula or, for bigger simulations a computer) and the results fedback to the teams. This type of simulation is still very much in use, but the term "game" has been widened to include a whole range of learning exercises involving the use of some more-or-less hypothetical "model" of formula for calculating the results or effects of decisions. Thus, games are available, or may be written, covering almost any aspect of organizational behaviour or, indeed, country, national or international behaviour.	Provided the game is well chosen and well designed (i. e. , appropriate for the level of learners and for their goals) then learners normally find this method highly enjoyable. One weakness of games/simulations is that they rely on a model of reality; these models will necessarily be over-simplified and there is therefore some danger that participants will form an over-simplified view of the real world. The emphasis with games is on the rationalization and logic that is necessarily inherent in virtually all models. This contrast with experiental exercises (see below) which place much more emphasis on attitudes and feelings
M8 Experiential and Discover Exercises	This is teaching/learning by experiential exercises. These exercises try to formalize the principle that we learn much more by doing things, by having things happen to us, and by experiencing things. Thus, learners are put in situations which are so designed as to recreate to the conditions about which they are trying to learn. For example, if the goal is to gain insight into the effects of inadequate communication within an organization, the exercise would involve setting up simulated organizations, with goals to achieve, in such a way that communication is hindered. The learners then experience first hand the effect of this.	Whilst simple discovery exercises can be designed to develop on understanding of basic knowledge concepts, most experiential exercises try to highlight not only the cognitive elements of the subject matters, but also the associated attitudes, feelings and emotions. In practice, experiential learning is mostly confined to such subjects as human relations, industrial relations, personnel management etc. There is no reason, however why such methods cannot be used in connection with any subject matter.

Technique	Meaning	Comments
T1 Reading	a) Random reading: Many of us learn a great deal from more or less random reading, which involves us in picking up and sorting out reading matter in books and journals. The benefit is often in trying to sort out the differences of opinion or in viewpoint of the different authors. b) Guided reading on the other hand, involves the tutor giving detailed references, handouts etc. , to the learner, often with guidelines, and discussion notes and assignments (e. g. , questions or exercises) to do, based on the reading	A highly effective technique of training in skills. The well-known "TWI" (Training Within Industry) Programme run by the Department of Employment/Training Services Agency incorporates instruction in how to use the Demonstration Method, both in general and, on the Clerical Supervision Course, for use in training in clerical skills.
T2 Observation	With unguided observation, the learner is simply told to go into situation and watch what goes on. With guided observation, observer is given a more detailed briefing, with guidance as to the sort of things to look for; after the observation itself, a debriefing, session is provided, in which the things that were observed are examined and discussed.	In general, unguided observation is both much more common and as such less effective than guided observation.
T3 Coaching	Coaching is an on-the-job, one-to-one learning situation. The learner is guided and shown what to do and how to do it by an experienced worker. For physical skills, coaching is virtually the same as demonstration. Coaching, however, is by no means restricted to physical skills, but it is also useful technique for guiding the individual learner in more or less any type of job or activity. Such as soccer or foot ball.	It might be argued that coaching is potentially the most common technique of teaching. It can be contrasted with counselling learner what to do, whilst counselling is a directive process in which the counsellor helps the learner decide for himself what to do.
T4 Counselling	Counselling is often related to coaching. In some ways it is indeed similar; thus, it involves counsellor and learner in a one-to-one learning situation, usually in an on-the-job situation. Although the term "counselling" used to be allied more to personal "welfare" issues than to work problems as such, this is no longer true. The main difference between counselling and coaching is that the emphasis, with the former is on helping the learner to identify the problem for himself, to generate his own possible solutions, and	Counselling is much harder than coaching. The relaatively non-directive role is not one that most managers or trainers can adopt without specific training. In cases where it is felt that there is very definitely a correct way of doing things, coaching is possibly more appropriate. On the other hand in cases which present scope for initiative, individuality and creativity, a counselling approach will probably be more beneficial.

Technique	Meaning	Comments
	to choose the best solution to weigh up the possible alternative solutions, and to choose the best solution himself. Coaching, on the other hand, involves the coacher telling the learner what to do.	
T5 Drill	The learner repeats the facts, does the task, practices the skill, displays the attitude, many times over a period of time. This constant repetition gradually impresses the learning into him. Learning is thus at memory level.	Drill is often boring. To alleviate this, it should be done in relatively short bursts, rests or other activity in between (i.e., drills should be "distributed" rather than "massed"). Alternatively, "memory gages" or memory aids" (see below) can be used.
T6 Memory Games	Games are really a way of making "drill" more enjoyable. They vary according to the nature of the subject matter (knowledge, skill or attitude) to be learned. Generally, they often incorporate some degree of individual or team competition. Thus, straight forward drill might be replaced by quizzes, or by card games (e. g., learners can develop a swift ability to match names of things with pictures of them by playing snap, with names on some of the cards and pictures of others).	With a bit of ingenuity, appropriate games can be devised to help with many memory learning situations. Some care must be taken to enusre that the game is suitable not only for the material to be learned, but also for the learner. There is a danger that such games might be treated as "a bit of lark".
T7 Memory Aids	These might almost be called techniques of avoiding instruction. Instead of trying to memorize a large amount of facts or skills, the learner is provided with an aid for quick reference when required. Thus, when he needs to "remember" something he refers to his instead. Over a period of time he probably will, in fact, memorize much of the material. Memory aids may include: - check lists - algoriths - information maps - instruction shoots	A tremendous amount of time is often wasted in attempting to commit things to memory unnecessarily. With some thought, this time, energy and money can be saved by using appropirate aids.

Source: Adapted from ECA/PHSD/HRP/91///3/5.2 OA: Education Staff Training Development Programme (Addis Ababa. UNECA, January, 1991) pp. 205-220.

Scope and Methodology of the Study

15.Section 1 provides the background against which the issues in the ensuing sections are explored. The meaning of the concepts used throughout the rest of the study are, therefore,based on the perspectives already articulated in the foregoing paragraphs. Section 11 deals with centralized and decentralized administration as a background against which to articulate training objectives, training approaches and methods from the African perspective. Experiences from some African countries are cited with the aim of drawing useful lessons for other African countries. In this regard,the rationale for decentralized administration and that of training objectives are articulated

16. Section 111 examines and suggests measures for the strengthening of training approaches and methods in the contxet of decentralized administration in Africa. The analysis of training needs would give direction to the formulation of training policies, strategies and methods. The concluding section underlines the salient issues raised and articulated in the study. Training approaches and methods emerge as the key to the effectiveness of training policy and programmes intended for senior personnel of decentralized administration. The training of adults must be pragmatic and relevant to both the trainees and the immediate and future development tasks of the nation.

SECTION II: CENTRALIZED AND DECENTRALIZED ADMINISTRATION IN THE CONTEXT OF TRAINING APPROACHES AND METHODS

17. Virtually all African countries have initiated training programmes to improve the productivity of personnel in both the central and local government administration. However, until recently the training approaches and methods in several countries have been ad hoc,haphazard and unco-ordinated.3/ The factors that have hitherto contributed to this state of affairs include the lack of clarity on the rationale for centralization and decentralization of government; the manpower requirements of the public sector; the instability of political and economic environment; the piecemeal administrative reforms based on the models of the erstwhile colonial countries; and the apparent diversity of opinions on the concept and practice of socio-economic development.

3/ Commowealth Secretariat,Decentralized Administration in Africa: Policies and Training Experience. p.120

Centralized Administration as a Strategy of Socio-Economic Development

18. The articulation of the concept of decentralization indicates that centralization of government can also be a viable strategy of effective development. There is, therefore, need to summarize some of the reasons that have been responsible for centralization in some African countries. Centralization and the resulting training approaches and methods could be attributed to any or all of the following causes:

(i) the imperatives of building cohesive nation-states out of fragmented orientation of the people and the economy during the colonial era;

(ii) the daunting challenges of providing a hitherto deprived population with the social infrastucture for rehabilitation and development after many years of exploitative colonial rule and subjugation of the indigenous people:the colonial deprivation of the indigenous people made it incumbent upon the central government to provide educational facilities, healthcare, roads,railways, posts and telecommunications facilities, water supplies, etc., which only the central government has even now been better placed to provide;

(iii) centralization of the armed forces and the police to eliminate abuses by the arbitrary powers of individuals and, above all, to foster a sense of national unity and sovereignty;

(iv) the colonial version of local government through chiefs was not intended to inculcate confidence in local initiatives in development but to alienate the traditional leaders from their grassroots as well as create a paternalistic relationship between the local communities and the central(colonial) government. This divide and rule philosophy was appropriate for colonial exploitation but inappropriate for the development of independent African countries;

(v) the perpetuation of the pre-independence centripetal bias to development has further disoriented peoples' initiatives:most people have become accustomed to the habit that all development initiatives must originate from the central government;

(vi) the distorted view of the financial implications of decentralization and development, due partly to the coercive nature of colonial antecedents and the inadequate understanding of the requirements of the contemporary concept of development, has also contributed to the strong case for centralization;

(vii) the transplanting of complex development models that might have been viable in their original home countries but are not amenable to the resources and cultural realities of Africa's rural populations has further

entrenched the external dependency syndrome in development policies, measures and programmes. In the circumstances only the central government is better equipped to do business with transnational corporations in agriculture, industry and other socio-economic transactions;

(viii) the personal ambitions of some individuals and cliques to undermine national unity as well as the tendency of some local elites to reassert the economic hegemony which they might have enjoyed in local communities during the colonial era have restrained the enthusiasm of the central government to speed up the process of decentralization. In the same vein, it could be argued that some individuals and cliques in the central government are in the habit of orchestrating the presence of anti-unity elements as an excuse to perpetuate centralization at all costs.

Decentralization as a Strategy of Socio-Economic Development

19. It is obvious that although there are valid reasons for the centralization of political and socio-economic development processes, the current wave of emphasis on popular participation in development in Africa indicates that decentralization has become the most popular choice as the effective strategy for urban, rural and national development. The case for decentralization and the expected training approaches and methods could be made on the following grounds:

(i) although centralization and decentralization are not contradictory concepts, the expansion of African econmies and the demands of the populations for more and more goods and services for which they cannot pay require that relatively independent local government councils and other grassroots instituttions be given the necessary responsibilities to handle specific development functions at the local level with greater speed and flexibility;

(ii) the linking of local government with financial decentralization would enable local populations and councils to appreciate the financial implications of societal development which has hitherto been the burden of the central government. It is argued, rightly, in a World Bank Development Report that decentralization of both spending and revenue mobilization process can improve the allocation of resources in the public sector since local council officials and the population would more closely link the problem of costs with the benefits of local public services. This would, no doubt, lend more realism to the requirements and the demands of local and national socio-economic development management;

(iii) local values, resources and the cultural dimensions of decision-making are not uniformly structured in any country; national policies and development plans deal essentially with aggregates. Therefore, the

decentralization of powers and the authority to translate these aggregates and adapt them to local realities would improve the chances of the success of local development efforts;

(iv) decentralization would lead to administrative simplification and thereby remove the stigma attached to the central bureaucracy of government. This would stimulate the evolution of managerial and technical capabilities for the planning and the implementation of relevant development projects and programmes at the local level;

(v) team spirit, popular participation, integrated development and the enhancement of self-help attitudes would be encouraged if people have the confidence that the destiny of their own development or underdevelopment lies in their own hands; they will be motivated to commit themselves and the available resources to development;

(vi) there is overwhelming empirical evidence that projects intended to reach the rural poor or to alleviate mass poverty could be more effective if handled at the local level;

(vii) the sheer expansion of the central goverment bureaucracy can be bewildering to the rural people who have not been exposed to the rat-race of urban life. If these people are compelled, under a centralized government administrative system, to travel to the capital city to seek for government assistance in agriculture,education or health matters, they would be discouraged from participating in development activities that entail travel to the regional or capital city. Decentralization would take the services to the people in their own local environment.

Objectives of Training for Decentralized Administration

20. Training objectives should flow from the the expected functions envisaged for the senior personnel; the patterns and the goals of decentralized administration and the development aspirations of the population. Based on these postulates, the methods of designing training programmes for the senior personnel of decentralized administration would focus on:

(i) provision of opportunities for open and free discussion of the practical implications of decentralization as one of the viable strategies for sustainable development;

(ii) the reorientation of the colonial and other mental attitudes of senior staff to the role of local government and field administration in local and national development;

(iii) ensuring that decentralized administration has competent and committed technical, managerial and administrative personnel who have confidence in their own efficiency and respect for public service ethics;

(iv) the training of trainers who would themselves not only train their own subordinates but also train new entrants into the service as well as elected and nominated mayors and councillors who are policy makers;

(v) the inculcation of general management skills in order to facilitate the mobility of senior personnel in the central and local government services;

(vi) ensuring that there are adequate skills for the specific requirements of urban and rural development management in view of the goal of balancing the development of rural and urban areas as integral parts of nations;

(vii) ensuring that senior personnel are equipped with the knowledge, skills and attitudes that would make them dynamic managers of the challenges of change which are inherent in the processes of decentralized administration.

The attainment of the above objectives would further entail the proper understanding and clarification of issues such as the academic and practical life-experiences as well as the country-specific background of the trainees; training levels; and the contents of training courses.

Training Policy Framework

21. The training policy framework should be based on an explicit understanding and commitment to certain principles. Those concerned with the formulation of training policy must appreciate the essence of training in preparing employees for the tasks of decentralized administration in the context of a specific country and its development objectives. There is also the consideration that training assists employees to improve the knowledge and skills required in the current job and other tasks that emerge with the passage of time and engender new requirements and skills.

22. There should also be the understanding that training is a continuous activity requiring the forecasting of manpower requirements, selection of senior personnel who would participate in the training, determining the training strategies and methodology, committing of resources, and putting forward training objectives to which the employees feel personally committed.

23. A training policy framework would be expected to define the training function in order to ensure that the principles mentioned above are translated into concrete action through the implementation of policy measures. The training function entails the definition and identification of training needs; formulation of training policy; implementation of training processes; and assessment of training effectiveness. All these components must consider social factors such as national legislation, the current and future educational system, and the working organization and environment. These latter two aspects of the training function suggest that training policy must be viewed from both the individual organizational unit and also from the national perspective. Needless, therefore, to observe that the training policies of individual local government units should not only take into consideration local problems and prospects but must be designed within the parameters of the national training policy framework.

24. Training policy must also be explicit on training administration. This is a crucial aspect of policy implementation. It is usually given perfunctory attention until something goes wrong with what was thought to be a good training programme. Implementing the training process mooted in the training policy statement entails the answering of questions on the type of training to be given; the venue and form of the training; the duration of the training period for various categories of senior staff; how programmes and individual courses should be designed;the methods, learning aids and devices available and suitable for use;the essence and methods of the assessment of the effectiveness of the training courses, programmes and related issues; and the need for research to improve on and strengthen the formulation and reform of training policy.

Current Training Approaches for Decentralized Administration

25. Most African countries tend to adopt pre-service and in-service strategies for the training of senior personnel of decentralized administration. The former approach tends to be generalist and the latter more specialized in nature. Generalist approaches are those that are part and parcel of university curricula or institutes of public administration and management. The graduates of these institutions would in most cases, have to look for employment for the first time. Young people from high school could, for instance, be sponsored to university to undergo a course of academic studies leading to a university degree in public administration with specialization in local government. On graduation, they are employed as assistant secretaries (administrative officers) in the Ministry of Decentralization or as the deputy chief executive of local government councils. There are other staff who may have been in the service of the central or local government and are given time to undergo specialized training courses without losing their jobs.

26. The generalist approach which almost all African countries pursued soon after the attainment of independence led, in some countries, to the overproduction of graduates in public administration without expertise in critical resources management disciplines like accountancy, financial budgeting and management,

projects analysis, taxation and fiscal policy,economic development planning, statistics, and business management. This deficiency in the initial generalist approach was compounded by the insular view of public administration as an elitist discipline that set itself apart from other management disciplines that have enhanced the economic development of the now industrialized nations.

27. Most African countries have since learnt their lesson. The focus on in-service training would seem to be on the ascendancy. This has the effect of improving both the productivity of the staff and reinforcing their commitment to the service. Some institutes of public administration have revised their programmes and geared them to the in-service training needs of decentralized administration. The Kenya Institute of Administration, for instance, has organized specialized courses for District Officers and Assistant Secretaries; Social Development Officers and other social workers serving in the provinces and districts; local government management courses for senior local government staff and central government staff involved in local government matters in the Ministries; municipal inspectorate courses for local government inspectorate staff; projects development management courses with emphasis on local level planning, integrated rural development management, project analysis and implementation for senior personnel of local government authorities as well as supervisory management courses for junior managers, foremen and supervisors in local goverment service.4/ The identification and analysis of training needs would provide the clue as to the approach to be employed in overcoming bottlenecks observed in the performance of senior and junior staff. Thus, it is essential to identify training needs as this exercise would indicate the prioritization of training approaches. Training needs analysis may, for instance, indicate whether induction and background training should be initiated or there is need for progressive training, refresher training, or reorientation training in view of introduction of automation that is new to the staff.5/

28. Since independence, African countries have pursued various approaches in grappling with problems of skills shortages and/or poor performance of senior and junior staff of local government and decentraized administration. Revision of the curricula and training programmes of national training institutions has been widespread. Botswana is one of the countries that have been in the forefront of the quest for improved approaches and methods of upgrading and strengthening the performance of local government staff throughout the country. The Botswana experience has been singled out for illustration because on the eve of political

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4/ Commonwealth Secretariat, 1989. p.48

5/ ECA/PHSD/HRP/91/3/5.2 OA Education staff training development programme: Course manual for trainers (UNECA, Jan. 1991) p. 12

independence in 1966 the country did not inherit a single secondary school that was built by the erstwhile colonial administration. There was no university or development management institute.

29. Botswana, therefore, started training and human resources development programmes on a clean but challenging slate. Institutions were established to provide both pre-service and in-service training in agriculture, health, administration and commerce, development management, polytechnical courses, and university courses at the University of Botswana. These institutions were obliged to provide places for cadres destined for local government and decentralized administration. As early as 1973, the government established a Unified Local Government Service aimed, among other things, at bringing the staff recruitment, placement and training functions under one umbrella.

30. Today, the Botswana Institute of Development Management(BIDM) acts as a pivotal institution for the training of middle and senior level managers for the unified local government system (ULGS). The BIDM and other Institutes respond to requests from the Ministry of Local Government and Lands to design and implement tailor-made courses for senior and other personnel of decentralized administration. In effect, there are different approaches to the implementation of training programmes. Some countries prefer to establish one training institution specifically for training in local government and decentralized administration while other countries choose to establish various institutions based on specialized disciplines. The Botswana Polytechnic, for instance, runs courses specifically to meet the requests for technicians by local government authorities.

31. A sample of experiences indicates that African public administration institutions use similar approaches and methods to organize courses on field administration and/or local government. Deconcentration and devolution are the dominant forms of decentralization reflected in the training programmes. The visible trend in practice in various African countries is, however, more in the direction of deconcentration than in the direction of devolution. Fig. 2 indicates the scenario of training approaches in some African institutions:

Fig. 2

AFRICAN TRAINING INSTITUTIONS ORGANISING FIELD ADMINISTRATION AND/OR LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROGRAMMES

Institutions	Programme Focus	
	Field Administration	Local Government
1. Kenya Institute of Administration	X	X
2. National Institute of Public Administration, Lusaka, Zambia	X	X
3. Sudan Academy of Administrative Sciences	X	X
4. Institute of Development Management, Mzumbe, Tanzania	X	X
5. University of Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania	-	X
6. Institute of Development Management, Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland	-	X
7. Institute of Administration, Zaria, Nigeria	-	X
8. Faculty of Administration, Unveristy of Ife, Nigeria	-	X
9. Department of political science and public administration, University of Nigeria, Nsukka	-	X
10. Staff Development Centre, Kaduna Polytechnic, Nigeria	-	X
11. Administrative Staff College of Nigeria, Badagry, Nigeria	X	X
12. Staff Training Centre, Mpemba, Malawi	-	X
13. Department of Rural and Urban Planning, University of Zimbabwe	X	X

Source: M. J. Balogun, "The nature and effectiveness of training for decentralized administrative systems in Africa" in Commonwealth Secretariat, Decentralized Administration in Africa: Policies and Training Experience (London, January 1989) p. 47.

32. Training institutions are generally expected to monitor changes in the focus of national policy on decentralized administration and socio-economic development. This monitoring process should enable the institutions to make the necessary changes in their training programmes in terms of curricula design, contents, approaches, methodologies and duration, etc. Empirical research would be required to determine whether or not training institutions have cared to review and update their curricula and training methodologies,say, in the last five years, assuming that the institutions have been in existence for more than five years.

Choice/Selection of Training Approaches and Methods

33. The choice of methods or a permutation of methods depends on several factors including the aim and objectives of the training programme, the academic and experiential profile of the prospective participants, the responsibilities to be assigned to the staff on completion of the training, the time available to the trainees, and the funds available to the government to finance the training programmes. Training methods as already defined are an integral part of courses design. Commonly used methods include group training through classroom lectures; case studies and discusions; use of audio-visual aids,flip-over charts, and overhead projectors; and tailor-made residential or non-residential courses. There are also individual training methods such as correspondence courses; on-the-job training; radio and television teaching. Group training through seminars and workshops in which there is maximum participation by the trainees would seem to be the most popular method of organizing the training of senior staff of local government and decentralized administration. A relatively detailed guide to some important training strategies and methods is depicted in Fig. 1 of this report.

34. Constraints on the selection of training approaches and methods include the misplaced identification of training needs; the distorted determination of development priorities; the proliferation of training institutions and the consequential spreading of scarce funds over many underutilized physical facilities; the neglect of validation, monitoring and evaluation of training programmes against the background of changing socio-economic forces and environment.

35. The criteria for selecting training methods specifically for senior personnel of decentralized administration could be summarized under the following checlist:

(i) the consideration that the individuals to be trained are adults who have considerable experience and would therefore not be motivated by stereotyped academic/classroom training methods;

(ii) the objectives of training and the feasibility of attainment of these objectives in terms of their relevance to the needs of the organization and those of the trainees:

(iii) the availability of resources including trainers or resource persons with requisite skills and experience for the required training;it is erroneous to assume that any person can be a trainer;

(iv) the identification of constraints in all their ramifications and the selection of methodologies that would minimize the constraints on the success of the training effort; and

(v) the dynamic nature of the methods given the changing development needs of the society.

This checklist of criteria for the selection of methods is not exhaustive but indicative of the serious consideration that should be given to choice of training methods.

Training Curriculum: Design, Content and National Development Policy

36. Training curriculum could be defined as a set of subject matters,issues and activities which are arranged in a logical sequence to impart and develop the knowledge, the skills and the attitudinal attributes of specific individuals/target populations in order to improve or strengthen their efficiency and competence in present and emerging jobs. The formulation of the training curriculum could, therefore, be referred to as **curriculum design.** The training **curriculum content** refers to the syllabus or the broad outline of subject matters, issues and activities to be covered in the schedule of training courses/workshops or training programmes.

37. The curriculum content is an integral part of the curriculum design. The recent experience of the Republic of Malawi could be used to illustrate this point. In May 1991 the Ministry of Local Government, Malawi, organized a workshop for senior executives, mayors, chairmen and their deputies. The workshop was intended to enable the designated officials to examine current trends in the development of the local government system in Malawi. The issues addressed included managerial, institutional and other performance problems which hindered the effective performance of local government authorities in the country.

38. The design of the workshop curriculum included an explication of the objectives to be achieved: the participatory and practical focus of the scheduling and the group discussions of the issues; the subjects to be covered during the workshop; the training methodologies (lectures and group discussions) that were considered appropriate to effectively cover the envisaged subjects(or syllabus): and a workshop programme to implement the curriculum designed. In most cases the curriculum design does not consider the essence of nationl policy on

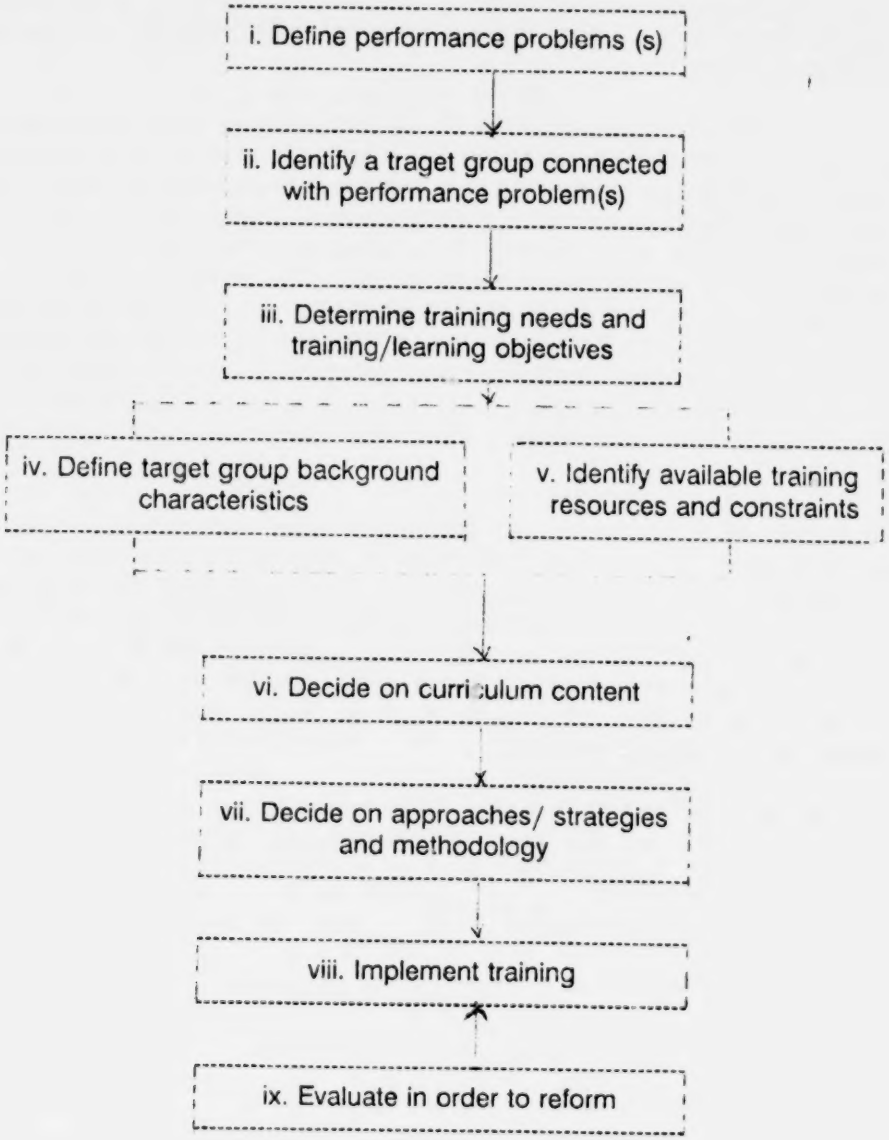
socio-economic development and decentralized administration. In the case of Malawi, however, this latter issue was included in the curriculum content under "Future Trends in Local Government".

39. An expert group workshop held at Arusha, Tanzania in 1981 on the theme "Curricula Design for Management Development", defined curriculum design as "aspects of training programme development such as course objectives, subject content(its range and intensity), methods used in teaching, course length,number of trainees, time-table layout, relations between practical work within and outside the classroom and theoretical study, means by which the trainees' performance are assessed and the way in which different elements are brought together to provide a programme with its own character6/. This definition is much more pointedly illustrated in Fig. 3

6/ United Nations,Curricula Design For Management Development, Report of an Expert Group Workshop, held at Arusha, Tanzania, 20-24 July, 1981 (New York, Department of Technical Co-operation for Development, 1982) p.9

Fig 3

Systematic stages of curricula design for training senior managers and administrators (adaptable to the needs of training approaches and methods for senior personnel of decentralized administration in Africa)


i. Define performance problems (s)
ii. Identify a traget group connected with performance problem(s)
iii. Determine training needs and training/learning objectives
iv. Define target group background characteristics
v. Identify available training resources and constraints
vi. Decide on curriculum content
vii. Decide on approaches/ strategies and methodology
viii. Implement training
ix. Evaluate in order to reform

Source: Adapted from Report of an Expert Group Workshop on Curricula Design for Management Development, Arusha, Tanzania, 1981 op.cit. p.16.

40. A word on Fig. 3 would further place the stages of curriculum design in perspective. Assume, for instance, that the Executive Branch of the government identifies a performance problem in rural development programmes. The poor performance of rural development projects has been traced to the lack of co-ordination among various government ministries, departments as well as among various senior personnel of local government councils or decentralized administration. Stage (i) of the curriculum design therefore deals with problem identification issues.

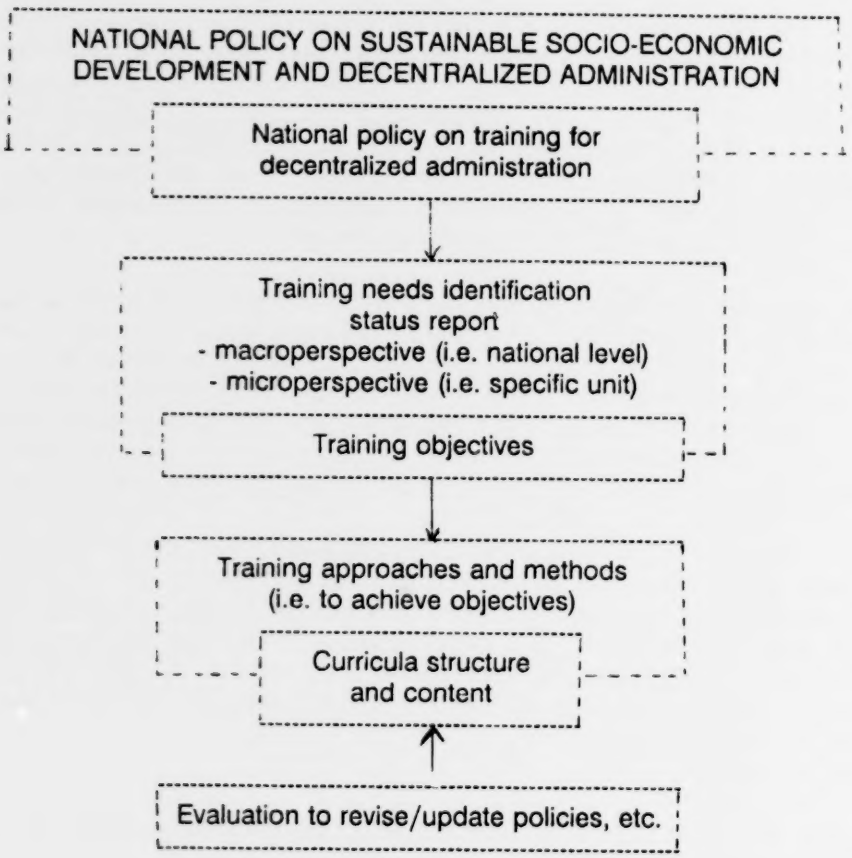
41. Stages (ii) and (iii) indicate that the senior personnel who need in-service training should include both central government officers and the chief executives of local government authorities that deal with rural development projects. Once training needs have been identified and determined, stages (iii) to (v) which are interrelated are treated together. They entail the specification of precise learning/performance objectives that are specific to the target group and relevant to the training needs and resources available for training. The next stage (vi) is to take decisions on the content or syllabus of the training course. For instance, in the case under consideration,training on how to perform management functions, including co-ordination, could be made a core theme in the course design content. Stage (vii) decisions would flow from the preceding stages (i) to (vi).

42. Stage (vii) is concerned with the identification and choice/selection of potentially useful approaches and methods for the implementation of the training(stage viii) while stage(ix) deals with the evaluation of the training. Evaluation is one of the overused words that require no elaboration. Suffice it to state that evaluation during and after the implementation of the training programme would provide useful information that could be used as input for the improvement of the ongoing and the future curriculum design, curriculum content, training approaches and methods.

43. The point has been made that curricula design and content must be rooted in the national policy on socio-economic development and the national policy on decentralized administration. Fig. 4 indicates the locus of training curricula in the national development policy paradigm.

Fig. 4

National Policy Framework for Curricula Design and Curricula Content


NATIONAL POLICY ON SUSTAINABLE SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND DECENTRALIZED ADMINISTRATION
National policy on training for decentralized administration
Training needs identification status report
- macroperspective (i.e. national level)
- microperspective (i.e. specific unit)
Training objectives
Training approaches and methods (i.e. to achieve objectives)
Curricula structure and content
Evaluation to revise/update policies, etc.

The derivation of training curricula design and content from national policy on development and decentralized administration cannot be overemphasized.

SECTION III MEASURES TO STRENGTHEN TRAINING APPROACHES AND METHODS.

44. The training of senior personnel as defined in this study is synonymous with the training of managers who are charged with responsibility for rural and urban development through the direction and the active participation of the people who live and earn their living from these areas of the country. In the circumstances, it may be noted that management training for local government must be job-specific, organization-specific, people-centred and attuned to the local development aspirations and resourcefulness of the people as well as the national development philosophy of the central government.

45. Effective training for decentralized administration must be pragmatic and should involve not only personnel who are directly employed on local government functions in the field but also all the central governemt personnel who have anything whatsoever to do with local governemnt and field administration matters. This comprehensive perspective of the target group for training would ensure that central and local goverment personnel fully appreciate the interrelatedness of local and central government management processes in development management.

46. Training approaches and methodologies flow from training policy statements. These statements, crucial as they are, must be regarded as indicative guidelines on the design of courses and the choice of methodologies, participants, training aids and related matters. It is,therefore,important to consider what should be done to strengthen training approaches and methods in order to make the training function more productive and hence cost effective. This is the task of the ensuing paragraphs.

(i) Formulation of a National Training Policy Based on National Training Needs Assessment

47. There must be a comprehensive policy on training for all aspects of national development based on the outcome of an exercise on the comprehensive and integrated assessment of the training needs of the nation. Within this framework of public policy on training for both the public and private sectors, there should be an explicit policy on training within the government bureaucracy, in general, and training for decentralized administration, in particular. The lack of comprehensive data on training needs has led to the churning out of hundreds of graduates in political science, social work, public administration, history, geography, and library studies. These graduates cannot find work in the present labour market because of the saturation of the market for their disciplines. Some

institutions have also continued to run out-of-date courses that are no longer relevant to current and future development challenges.7/

(ii) Training Needs assessment:a pragmatic and functional approach

48. It is intriguing that even though most African countries are aware of the essence of training needs assessment as a prerequisite for the design and implementation of effective training approaches and methods, this awareness is not reflected in national policies on training for the public service. This omission is even more significant in the area of training approaches and methods for personnel of decentralized administration because the concept and practice of decentralization have yet to take firm roots in administrative systems in Africa.

49. The articulation of the concept of training needs would place its essence in the proper context. Training needs entail the determination of the jobs currently being performed by employees; how efficiently and effectively the jobs are being performed vis-a-vis the expectations of organizational and development objectives of society; and the gaps between the expected and the actual performance levels of the employees or personnel. The revealed gaps would give clues as to the type of training required and the approaches and methods to effect the needed training. The determined gaps must be seen not only in terms of the immediate but also matched against the future expansion and other challenges of development. This short-term and long-term job analysis phase of training needs identification must be followed by the determination of the personnel who must be trained or retrained. Experiences indicate that the choice of personnel for training is either haphazard,misplaced or arbitrary. This is not in the interest of national development nor that of the participants in training courses.

50. There are many methods of determining training needs 8/. The preceding paragraph summarises the essence of these methods. Training needs assessment would, therefore, among other things,indicate the training needs of individuals or groups as well as indicate the needs that must be met immediately or in the future; or those that call for formal and informal training approaches and methods;on-the-job or off-the-job training; where and how to ensure that the training programme is effectively accomplished. As a result of training needs analysis it could be decided that the training activities could be undertaken within the central and local government machinery itself,through outside sources within

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7/ ECA/PAMM/PAM/1(1.3), Major problems in public personnel management: A country case study of Zambia(Addis Ababa, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 1988) p.15

8/ Richard B. Johnson,"Determining Training Needs" in Robert L.Craig and Lester R.Bittel (eds.), Training and development handbook: (New York, American Society for Training and Development, McGraw-Hill, 1967) p.16

or outside the country,in collaboration with local institutions or technical assistance could be sought from development partners.

51. Pragmatic and functional training needs assessment in the context of senior personnel for decentralized administration should be posited within the framework of the the present and projected functions of urban and rural local government authorities. In this regard the pattern of local government units must be clearly defined. Since these units are the creations of the central government,the central-local government relationships must similarly be explicitly defined and mutually understood in order to ensure that there is harmonious development of the nation. The functional approach to training needs analysis would also afford the central government the opportunity to determine the magnitude of responsibilities to delegate to urban and rural local government units. This would facilitate the rationalization and streamlining of training approaches and methods.

(iii) Prioritization of the functions of local government units

52. The functions of central and local governments are complementary. These functions are often shared. The trend towards decentralization for speedy economic development suggests,however , that many functions or certain aspects of many functions which are currently in the hands of the central government or its field administration agencies should be delegated to local government units. Some of these functions include a variety of services involving the development of agriculture; natural resurces; town planning; public health; public works; management of recreational facilities.9/ Because of the financial resources constraints on local governments and the complexity of decentralization, the issue should focus more on the gradual and systematic devolution or delegation of powers and functions as these governments gain experience and their staff acquire expertise in socio-economic development management. The move to thrust unwieldly responsibilities on local government personnel must be avoided.

53. A journey through the capital and other main cities of most African countries would reveal the disastrous nature of basic human services such as drinking water supply, sewage disposal, refuse collection, zoning and buildings control, maintenance of gutters and public streets,public health and sanitation facilities especially drainage, and the stench of squatter settlements. The question is :who is to blame for this dismal scenario of basic human living conditions-the central or local(municipal) government? The answer lies in the need to prioritize the

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9/ United Nations,Report of a United Nations Seminar on Central Services to Local Authorities, held at New Delhi, India, with the co-sponsorship of the Eastern Regional Organization for Public Administration and with the co-operation of the Government of India, 21 October to 6 November 1963 (New York, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Division for Public Administration and the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East,1963) p.15

delegation of functions to local governments. It is more realistic to argue that delegation of functions to local governments must keep pace with the financial resources available and the availability of trained personnel to manage the resources efficiently and cost effectively. Without prioritization of the allocation and devolution of functions by the central government, decentralized administration would achieve short-term political objectives to the detriment of short-term and long-term socio-economic development goals of the population.

(iv) Identification of central government functions and personnel that are relevant to local level economic development

54. The integrated nature of training approaches and methods advocated in this study makes it imperative for local authorities to match their development priorities with those of the functions of central government personnel. Group training in which relevant central government and local government personnel participate would afford the participants an opprotunity to become acquainted with the problems and prospects of decentralization for development. This would also help to overcome the mutual suspicion that has been known to bedevil the relations between central and local government personnel.

55. Senior personnel of local government would also be in a better position to know the locus of power and functions at the national level. This knowledge would further place the senior personnel in a position to consult with the appropriate central government officials whenever there is need to seek central government assistance to solve a ploblem at the local level. There is also the consideration that central government personnel could be seconded to the field or to a local government unit. A central government personnel who has participated at a training workshop attended by local government personnel would appreciate local government development issues much more than one who has not interacted with the first hand development issues of local governments.

(v) Involvement of stakeholders(interested parties) in local level development initiatives

56. The involvement of all persons who have interest in development through the initiatives of the people themselves could be productive. In this connection, the central government, elected representatives of the local people; personnel charged with responsibility for the daily functioning of local government offices; property and landowners in urban and rural areas are all stakeholders in decentralization for development. They are all capable and interested in putting forward ideas on development planning and participating in the implementation and management of the development programmes of their local areas. Therefore, the involvement of all stakeholders in the design and implementation of training approaches and methods would provide senior personnel of decentralized administrations with ample opportunities to learn how to serve the people better.

(vi) Civil service reforms

57. The political instability which has been the hallmark of the political-economic experience of several African countries has taken its toll of standards, ethics and the efficiency of the civil service. It is unrealistic to expect a weak civil service to undertake any meaningful decentralization programme much less formulate serious and relevant approaches and methods for the training of senior personnel for decentralized administration. The World Bank states from experience that after the overthrow of governments most civil service agencies tend to become disorganized, indisciplined, partly corrupt and demoralized. Without comprehensive administrative reforms it is difficult to undertake programmes that would bring about long-term development 10/. Similarly,to strengthen the process of decentralization and evolve relevant training approaches and methods for senior and junior personnel,all governments would need to review the functioning of their public administrative systems. The civil service should be capable of formulating a nation-wide training policy . Political leaders invariably look up to senior civil servants to provide the guidelines on training for the central and decentralized administration.

(vii) Commitment to training for decentralized administration

58. There must be commitment to decentralization and the training required of senior personnel at all levels of government. This commitment can be demonstrated in several ways including the allocation of funds from the national budget to enable national training institutions provide uptodate approaches and methods especcially for the inservice training of the senior personnel required for the successful implementation of decentralized administration processes. It is evident that in most African countries national institutes of management and public administration do not have adequate funds to provide hostel accommodation, simple meals, electricity, water supply, equipped classrooms and other amenities for the training of adequate numbers of senior, especially the senior technical personnel necessary to man the services which decentralization has delegated to local governments and field administration. There are also inadequate funds to improve the conditions of service of the staff in the national institutions. There is therefore urgent need for governments to translate political and other public pronouncements into concrete measures in order to ensure that national institutions adopt dynamic approaches and methods in the training of personnel for decentralized administration.

10/ Ladipo Adamolekun,World Bank Support for Public Administration Programs in the Central African Republic (Washington D.C., Economic Development Institute of The World Bank, 1988).

(viii) Reorientation of overseas training

59. Technical cooperation agreements for the training of school leavers and inservice personnel in different disciplines have generally been entered into on the understanding that the envisaged training is within the framework of the development priorities of the country. However, because of the haphazard nature of the formulation and co-ordination of the national policy on training as well as the shoddy organization and management of the training functions of the government, some officials are sent overseas for training courses that are either available locally or are irrelevant to the development priorities of the nation. The current trends towards greater decentralization and democratization of development suggest that all African countries need to review all technical co-operation agreements with a view to ensuring that the appoaches and methods used are amenable to the realities of the new directions in Africa's development paradigm. While, for instance, it may be tenable to pursue courses such as town planning and valuation in countries that already have both the facilities and appropriate training methods and equipments, it would be more rewarding if technical assistance were sought to localize the training at the sub-regional or regional levels. This point is further explored in the next paragraph.

(ix) National collaboration with multi-and-bilateral agencies

60. The LPA and the Final Act of Lagos(FAL) advocate regional integration as the anchor-sheet of sustainable development of African countries. The African Charter on Popular Participation in Development places human dimensions at the centre of all development endeavours. In view of the fact that decentralization is one of the strategies to realize some of the goals of the LPA,FAL and the Charter, it follows that public administration institutions in Africa could pool their resources together through exchange programmes, involving staff and trainees, in the interest of the rationalization and the strengthening of training approaches and methods.

61. In the same vein, governments could assist their national institutions, including the Ministries of Local Governments,to tap the technical assistance resources available at United Nations agencies and institutions; USAID; the EEC/FED; the Commonwealth and other Third world countries under South-South technical co-operation arrangements. In effect, the adoption of decentralization as a development strategy should be reflected in the re-ordering of the training priorities to be considered in negotiations for technical co-operation agreements.

(x) Evaluation of training approaches and methods

61. A carefully designed training curriculum would generally have inbuilt provision for evaluation during the progress of the training course. There is also the end-of-course evaluation which may be done through the use of questionnaires. However, the evaluation of participants performance long after

they have completed a training programme has generally been neglected by most African countries. As a result of this neglect, training approches and methods are not updated in line with the emergence of new development challenges which may require new skils or the strengthening of old skills. A strong case should therefore be made for the on-the-job evaluation of the performance of all those who have benefited from training programmes in order to determine the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of training methods and the relevance of training programmes. Evaluation may also reveal the periodic training needs of senior executives of decentralized administration.

SECTION IV: CONCLUSIONS

The following conclusions may be drawn from the issues raised in this study:

63. The issues that impinge upon the approaches and methods of training senior personnel for decentralized administrations in Africa are complex and should therefore not be viewed from a simplistic perspective. These issues range from the conceptualization and the resulting mosaic of patterns of decentralized administrative systems that could be encountered in different African countries to the practical measures which each country is undertaking to realize its goals of decentralization for development.

64. There is apparent consensus that the training of personnel is the key to an efficient and cost effective decentralized administrative system. However, the co-ordination and the substantive translation of public and documentary declarations into concrete measures leave much to be desired. Budgetary allocations to public management and administration training institutions do not seem to reflect the magnitude of commitment to the improvement of the approches and methods of training for decentralized administration.

65. The study argues also that training approaches and methods would become more pertinent if there is an explicit appreciation of the essence and the implications of decentralization as both an economic and political development strategy. It is therefore suggested that there should be an integrated approach to the analysis and the formulation of the approaches and the methods for the training of the personnel of decentralized administration. The advantages of the joint training of the senior staff of the central and local governments have been underlined in this study.

66. It is also obvious that inherited systems of local administration and the concomitant training approaches and methods have not helped the personnel in the administrative systems of independent African countries to handle the current economic crisis with confidence. It has become increasingly imperative for the central government to share development responsibilities with local level units of government. This trend has increased the workload of local governments at a time when the financial resources of all units of government are shrinking. In the circumstances, the study argues for the striking of an optimal balance between

central and local government responsibilities and resources in order to evolve training approaches and methods that would prepare the senior staff to competently handle emerging development challenges in the 1990s and beyond.

67. There is also the conclusion that training approaches and methods must be more pragmatic and less academic in nature. In this regard, special attention must be paid to the design of the curricula specifically in the context of decentralized administration and national development. The solution of problems and better service to members of the community must be regarded as a critical factor in the design of training curricula and in any choice of approaches and methods for a sound local government personnel system.

68. Measures suggested for the strengthening of the approaches for the training of the senior staff of decentralized administrations include: (i) the imperatives of formulating a national training policy based on national training needs assessment, (ii) the adoption of a pragmatic and functional approach to training needs identification and analysis; (iii) the prioritization of the functions of decentralized units of government; (iv) the identification of central government personnel who deal with decentralized administration matters in order to design joint training methods; (v) the involvement of all stakeholders in local level development initiatives in line with the letter and spirit of popular participation trends of socio-ecenomic development; (vi) civil service reforms in view of the fact that a stable and confident civil service is better placed to formulate sound training approaches and methods than a weak one; (vii) the total commitment of all political leaders to decentralization and the translation of this commitment into concrete and visible measures; (viii) the reorientation of overseas training and reflection of the need for pertinent courses and training methods in technical co-operation agreements; (ix) the essence of national collaboration with multilateral and bilateral agencies from the international community and within the expectations of the Lagos Plan of Action, the Final Act of Lagos, and the human dimension approach enshrined in the African Charter for Popular Participation in Development; and (x) the critical role of curricula design as well as training programmes evaluation in the revision and reform of training methodologies to enhance the relevance and the effectiveness of training courses for senior and subordinate personnel of decentralized administrations in Africa.